

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 CU-05

AID-05 DRC-01 OMB-01 /102 W
----- 010757

P R 050420Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7394

INFO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

AMCONSUL UDORN

CINCPAC

DIA WASHDC

13TH AIR FORCE CLARK AB

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 16047

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, TH

SUBJECT: NLA PASSES DRAFT CONSTITUTION

REF: A) BANGKOK 15947; B) BANGKOK 15891; C) BANGKOK 15768

1. IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 10 OF THE 1972 INTERIM CONSTITUTION, THE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (NLA), 286 SITTING WITH 286 MEMBERS OUT OF A TOTAL OF 298, APPROVED THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION IN THE THIRD READING AT 1007 HOURS OCTOBER 5 BY A MARGIN OF 280 TO 6. THE ASSEMBLY'S SOLE LABOR LEADER AND FIVE ACADEMICS VOTED AGAINST.

2. DURING THE PAST FEW DAYS PRO-CONSTITUTION LOBBYISTS WITHIN
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THE ASSEMBLY HAD COLLECTED SIGNED PLEDGES OF SUPPORT FOR PASSAGE

(REF A). NLA MEMBER SAMAK SUNTHONWET (FORMER MEMBER OF THE DEMOCRAT PARTY, JOURNALIST, AND CLOSE FRIEND OF NLA SPEAKER M.R. KHUKRIT PRAMOT) WAS PROMINENT IN THIS EFFORT. ONE NLA MEMBER TOLD US OCTOBER 4 THAT HIS WAS THE 227TH PLEDGE BEFORE THE CLOSE OF FRIDAY MORNING'S NLA SESSION.

3. THE SECURITY SITUATION IN BANGKOK REMAINED CALM AS THE NLA MEMBERS CAST THEIR VOTES IN A ROLL CALL HEARD THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY ON THE RADIO. THE POLICE HAD TAKEN SOME EXTRA PRECAUTIONS IN THE AREA OF THE ASSEMBLY BUILDING, BUT THE MAJORITY OF UNIFORMED OFFICERS PRESENT WERE POLICEWOMEN WHO HAD ONLY RECENTLY JOINED THE FORCE IN A NEW PROGRAM INSTITUTED THIS SUMMER. ALL MAJOR STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS ANNOUNCED PRIOR TO THE VOTE THAT THEY WOULD NOT STAGE DEMONSTRATIONS ON THE DAY THE NLA VOTED (REF B AND C).

4. COMMENT: TO COMPLETE PROMULGATION OF THE CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE 10 OF THE INTERIM CONSTITUTION REQUIRES THAT THE SPEAKER OF THE ASSEMBLY PRESENT THE CONSTITUTION TO THE KING FOR THE ROYAL SIGNATURE. SPEAKER KHUKRIT HAS RECENTLY SUGGESTED OCTOBER 8 AS A PROPITIOUS DATE FOR PROMULGATION, SINCE IT ALSO MARKS KING CHULALONGKON'S ABOLITION OF SLAVERY.

5. ACCORDING TO THE TRANSITORY PROVISIONS WRITTEN INTO THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION, THE PRESENT ASSEMBLY CONTINUES TO SIT AND EXERCISE LEGISLATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES UNTIL THE NEW PARLIAMENT IS ELECTED. THE PRESENT CABINET'S TERM OF OFFICE, OR THE CABINET IN OFFICE AT THE TIME OF THE ELECTIONS, ENDS WITH THOSE 1 FEBRUARY 1975 ELECTIONS. THAT CABINET WILL THEN EXERCISE CARETAKER POWERS UNTIL THE ELECTED PARLIAMENTARIANS FORM THE NEW CABINET.
MASTERS

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